

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8963
INFO AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 JIDDA 6016

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TAGS: ASUP, SA
SUBJ: OFFICIAL VEHICLES

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SUMMARY: EMBASSY PROVIDES A DETAILED REVIEW OF ITS TRANSPORTATION NEEDS AND HOLDINGS: AVAILABILITY OF PARTS AND QUALITY OF MAINTENANCE ARE GOOD FOR GMC AND CHRYSLER PRODUCTS; AVAILABILITY OF PARTS FOR INTERNATIONAL HARVESTER CARRYALLS IS POOR. FLEXIBILITY OF EMBASSY'S FLEET OF ELEVEN VEHICLES IS LIMITED BY REQUIRED DAILY ASSIGNMENTS WHICH CANNOT BE COMBINED OR RESCHEDULED. VEHICLES ALSO IN CONSTANT, ROUTINE SERVICE FOR OFFICIAL REASONS AND TO PROVIDE TRANSPORTATION FOR EMBASSY WOMEN-- BOTH MARRIED AND SINGLE. SINCE WOMEN MAY NOT DRIVE NOR RIDE TAXIS, THEIR VEHICLE NEEDS CANNOT EASILY BE MET BY THE THREE OF FOUR (MAXIMUM) AVAILABLE AT ANY ONE TIME FOR ALL EMBASSY FUNCTIONS. THEIR ENSURING CONFINEMENT AND ENFORCED IMMOBILITY CONSTITUTE A PROBLEM THAT CANNOT BE RESOLVED WITHIN OUR PRESENT CAPABILITIES. THE EMBASSY REQUESTS ASSIGNMENT OF AN ADDITIONAL FIVE DRIVERS TO ITS LOCAL COMPLEMENT STRENGTH AND A NET ADDITION OF TWO MORE VEHICLES FOR JIDDA. IT ALSO REQUESTS A VEHICLE AND DRIVER FOR FSO-4 MCARTHUR IN RIYADH, AND AN ADDITIONAL PASSENGER VEHICLE AND DRIVER FOR THE CONSULATE GENERAL IN DHRHAN. END SUMMARY.

1. PRESENT VEHICLE RESOURCES: THE EMBASSY NOW HAS ONE
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SEDAN, ONE STATION WAGON, FIVE CARRYALLS (ONE WAS COMPLETELY

WRECKED IN JULY 1974; SEE JIDDA 4091), AND TWO LANDROVERS.
THE AMBASSADOR AND DCM HAVE SEPARATELY ASSIGNED VEHICLES.

2. THE PRESENT MILEAGE ON THE EMBASSY'S FLEET OF 11 VEHICLES
IS: (A) 1969 BUICK 33,039 MILES; (B) 1971 PLYMOUTH SEDAN
31,920; (C) 1971 PLYMOUTH STATION WAGON 33,886; (D) 1972
PLYMOUTH SEDAN 23,611; (E,G,G) THREE 1973 INTERNATIONAL
HARVESTER CARRYALLS (IHC) 11,141, 10,864, 11,781; (H,I) TWO
1972 CARRYALLS 34,268, 42,214; AND (J,K) TWO LANDROVERS
37,245 KMS., 57,592 KMS.

3. MAINTENANCE: AVAILABILITY OF PARTS AND QUALITY OF MAIN-
TENANCE (EMBASSY GARAGE) IS GOOD FOR GMC AND CHRYSLER
PRODUCTS; AVAILABILITY OF PARTS FOR IHC'S IS POOR. USAGE
OF FIVE CARRYALLS AVERAGE 1,837 MILES PER MONTH. THE SEDAN
AND STATION WAGON AVERAGE 1,480 MILES EACH PER MONTH.
MILEAGE IS NOT INDICATIVE OF THE SHAPE OF THE VEHICLES
WHICH DETERIORATE RAPIDLY DUE TO SEASIDE SALT CORROSION,
HIGH HUMIDITY AND POOR ROAD AND TRAFFIC CONDITIONS. CONDITION
OF THE LANDROVERS IS POOR; THE 1969 BUICK IS LIKEWISE UN-
RELIABLE: IT HAS TWICE BROKEN DOWN IN COURSE OF AMBASSADOR'S
OFFICIAL TRIPS TO TA'IF (TO BE REPLACED PER PREVIOUS TELS).
1972 CARRYALLS ONLY IN FAIR CONDITION.

4. SCHEDULING COMMITMENTS: DAILY ASSIGNMENTS INCLUDE:
(A) DRIVER AND CARRYALL ASSIGNED TO THE CONSULAR SECTION;
(B) ONE CARRYALL ASSIGNED TO THE EMBASSY'S CUSTOMS UNIT
(VEHICLE MUST BE LOCKABLE FOR RECEIVING AIR SHIPMENTS AND
SMALLER BOXES FROM CUSTOMS); (C) DRIVER AND CARRYALL
ASSIGNED 4 HOURS DAILY TO THE DOWNTOWN COMMERCIAL OFFICE;
AND (D) STATION WAGON AND DRIVER USED APPROXIMATELY ONE HOUR
PER DAY FOR NEEDS OF THE AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE. DCM HAS
MET WITH CONSULAR AND GENERAL SERVICE SECTIONS TO ASCERTAIN
IF SOME OF THESE--OR OTHER FUNCTIONS--COULD BE COMBINED,
THEREBY RELEASING A VEHICLE FOR GENERAL USE. THEY COULD NOT.

5. OTHER DAILY USES OF THE REMAINING VEHICLES INCLUDE:
(A) TRANSPORTATION FOR LOCAL EMPLOYEES, LABORERS, AND CHAR
FORCE SIX TIMES DAILY; (B) CARRYALL TO SUPPLEMENT SCHOOL
BUS--SCHOOL BUS HAS CAPACITY OF 25 PERSONS BUT STUDENT
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BODY NUMBERS 35 AND STILL GROWING; (C) VEHICLES USED FOR
DAILY MESSENGER SERVICE AND PICK UP APO MAIL, INTERNATIONAL
MAIL AND INCOMING AND OUTGOING AIR POUCHES; (D) LOCAL PUR-
CHASES; (E) DEPARTURES AND ARRIVALS AT AIRPORT OF EMBASSY
PERSONNEL AND NUMEROUS OFFICIAL VISITORS; AND (F) SHUTTLE
BUSES TO PROVIDE TRANSPORTATION FOR SHOPPING; (G) VEHICLES
FOR USE BY EMBASSY WOMEN--SEE PARA 7. THE EMBASSY TRIES NOT
TO USE THE LANDROVERS--EXCEPT IN EMERGENCY--AS PASSENGER

VEHICLES.

6. VEHICLE/DRIVER SHORTAGES, BAN ON WOMEN DRIVING: THE NINE PASSENGER VEHICLES LISTED IN PARAGRAPH 2 ARE IN SIMULTANEOUS USE DURING THE DAY, IN THE EVENINGS, AND ON WEEK-ENDS. AFTER DEDUCTING FOR THE CLAIMS ON TRANSPORTATION RESOURCES (PARAS 4 AND 5) THERE ARE SELDOM MORE THAN THREE CARRYALLS AND ONE SEDAN AVAILABLE FOR USE OF ALL EMBASSY PERSONNEL. THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE ASSIGNED TO JIDDA HAS INCREASED IN THE PAST YEAR, AS THE POST WAS RAISED FROM CLASS III TO CLASS II; THERE ARE NOW 43 PERSONS AT POST WHO DO NOT RPT NOT HAVE AN ASSIGNED CAR AND DRIVER. (THE EMBASSY PROVIDES TRANSPORTATION FOR ITS SEVEN MARINE SECURITY GUARDS WHO ARE NOT PERMITTED TO SHIP OR OWN PRIVATE VEHICLES, NOR DRIVE UNTIL THEY HAVE BEEN ON POST SIX MONTHS. NEWLY-ARRIVED PERSONNEL ALSO NEED TRANSPORTATION FOR FOUR TO SIX MONTHS BEFORE THEIR PERSONAL VEHICLES ARRIVE.)

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7. FURTHERMORE, THE SAUDI PROHIBITION AGAINST WOMEN DRIVING, OR RIDING IN A TAXI (UNLESS ACCOMPANIED BY A MALE RELATIVE), CREATES ADDITIONAL HEAVY DEMANDS FOR CHAUFFER SERVICES. THE MOTOR POOL MUST RESPOND TO REQUESTS FOR CARS AND DRIVERS FOR VISITS TO DOCTOR'S OFFICES, OFFICIAL RECEIPTIONS, TEAS, PROTOCOL CALLS, DINNER PARTIES, BIRTHDAY PARTIES, CHILDREN'S RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES, AND OTHER PERSONAL MATTERS.

8. WE DO NOT BELIEVE THE SERVICES PROVIDED TO THE WOMEN IN THE EMBASSY COMMUNITY HAVE DIMINISHED IN RECENT YEARS DESPITE THE GROWTH IN EMBASSY STAFF. THE AMBASSADOR MEETS REGULARLY

WITH THE SINGLE WOMEN EMPLOYEES, AND HAS GIVEN THEIR NEEDS AND REQUESTS HIS PERSONAL ATTENTION. IN TERMS OF CULTURAL ATTITUDES AND EXPECTATIONS, HOWEVER, EMBASSY WOMEN IN 1974 ARE LESS PREPARED TO ACCEPT THE CONFINEMENT AND ENFORCED ISOLATION THAT A SAUDI ARABIAN ASSIGNMENT HAS INVOLVED, THAN THEIR PREDECESSORS WERE IN THE 1960'S AND EARLY '70'S.

EMBASSY WOMEN, FOR INSTANCE, HAVE AFFIRMED THEIR BELIEF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HAS A GREAT AN OBLIGATION TO PROVIDE FOR THEIR MOBILITY, AS IT DOES FOR THE EDUCATION OF THEIR CHILDREN (JIDDA'S REFTEL). EMBASSY SINGLE WOMEN HAVE AFFIRMED THEIR WILLINGNESS TO PAY THE COSTS OF GAS, MILEAGE, AND DEPRECIATION, BUT BELIEVE DRIVER SERVICES SHOULD BE AVAILABLE WHEN NEEDED AND PROVIDED GRATIS. MARRIED WOMEN FEEL STRONGLY THAT EXPANDED DRIVER SERVICES SHOULD BE AVAILABLE TO THEM BECAUSE THEIR HUSBANDS OFTEN CANNOT ADJUST THEIR DAILY SCHEDULES TO CHAFFEUR THEM ABOUT IN POV'S.

9. THE EMBASSY, HOWEVER, HAS ONLY NINE CHAUFFEURS TO PROVIDE
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SERVICES FROM 0600 TO 2400. THEY WORK A SIX-DAY, 48-HOUR WEEK, AND MUST ALSO WORK OVERTIME TO MEET ALL DEMANDS. ONE MAN YEAR IS LOST EACH YEAR DUE TO ANNUAL AND SICK LEAVE. AFTER DUTY HOURS ONLY TWO VEHICLES AND DRIVERS ARE AVAILABLE UNTIL 2400--AT SOCIAL FUNCTIONS, THEREFORE, SINGLE WOMEN OFTEN MUST EITHER LEAVE EARLY OR TRY TO GET A RIDE TO THE EMBASSY WITH A FELLOW GUEST. THE EMBASSY REQUESTS, THEREFORE, ITS LOCAL COMPLEMENT STRENGTH BE INCREASED BY AN ADDITIONAL FIVE DRIVERS (FOR VEHICLE NEEDS, SEE NEXT PARAGRAPH). THESE DRIVERS WOULD ENABLE THE EMBASSY TO ASSIGN THREE MORE DRIVERS--FROM 0800 TO 1600 (WHEN VEHICLE REQUESTS USUALLY PEAK), ASSIGN TWO MORE DRIVERS TO THE NIGHT SHIFT, AND EXTEND NIGHT-TIME SERVICE FOR ONE CAR AND DRIVER UNTIL 0200 HOURS EACH MORNING.

10. ADDITIONAL VEHICLE NEEDS: THE CURRENT RATIO OF TRUCK-TYPE VEHICLES VS. SEDANS COULD BE CHANGED AS SOME CARRYALLS ARE NOW BEING USED WHERE LOWER-PRICED SEDANS OR STATION WAGONS WOULD SUFFICE. THE WRECKED CARRYALL IS NOW BEING REPLACED BY A MAXIWAGON WHICH WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE TO THE POST FOR ANOTHER YEAR. THIS LEAVES THE CURRENT VEHICLE BALANCE AT TWO SEDANS AND SEVEN TRUCK-TYPE VEHICLES (INCLUDING THE LANDROVERS AND EXCLUDING THE AMBASSADOR'S AND DCM'S CARS). THE POST NEEDS TO HAVE ON HAND A MINIMUM OF FOUR LARGE CARRYALLS WITH CARRYING CAPACITY OF 8-9 PERSONS AND ANOTHER CARRYALL WITH CARGO-CARRYING CAPACITY FOR THE CUSTOMS UNIT. THE REMAINING CARRYALL AND LANDROVER SHOULD BE REPLACED BY SEDANS. THE SUGGESTED RATIO AND TOTAL VEHICLE HOLDINGS WOULD, THEREFORE, BE ONE MAXIWAGON, FIVE CARRYALLS, TWO SEDANS (AMB, DCM), PLUS FIVE MORE SEDANS OR STATION WAGONS. THESE FIGURES INCLUDE THREE ADDITIONAL SEDANS WE ARE REQUESTING IN THE FOLLOWING

PARAGRAPH.

11. THE IMMEDIATE AVAILABILITY OF RECONDITIONED 1973 PLYMOUTH SEDANS MENTIONED REF A CAN ASSIST THE POST IN SOLVING ITS VEHICLE PROBLEMS. THE POST REQUESTS ASSIGNMENT TO ITS VEHICLE FLEET OF THREE SEDANS--OF THIS NUMBER, ONE WOULD BE AN ADDITIONAL VEHICLE, AND TWO WOULD REPLACE A LANDROVER AND A CARRYALL RESPECTIVELY.

12. AN ADDITIONAL PASSENGER VEHICLE AND DRIVER ARE REQUIRED FOR THE CONSULATE GENERAL IN DHAHRAN IF WE ARE TO PURSUE AN UNCLASSIFIED

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ACTIVE COMMERCIAL PROGRAM IN THE EASTERN PROVINCE.

13. TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE SUPPORT FOR OUR NEW INSTALLATION IN RIYADH A VEHICLE AND A DRIVER ARE REQUIRED. A STATION WAGON WOULD BE THE MOST APPROPRIATE VEHICLE AS IT COULD DOUBLE AS A CARGO CARRIER FOR POUCHES AND SMALL SHIPMENTS OF SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT.
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